**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Claims 1-26. (Canceled).

27.    (Currently Amended) A depolarizer <u>with three birefringent plates,</u> ~~as in claim 26~~ where the thicknesses of the plates are <u>in a</u> [[the]] ratio of 1:3:9.

28.    (Currently Amended) A depolarizer <u>with three birefringent plates,</u> ~~as in claim 26~~ where the thicknesses of the plates are <u>in a</u> [[the]] ratio of 4:3:9.

29.    (Currently Amended) A depolarizer <u>with three birefringent plates,</u> ~~as in claim 26~~ where the angle between two of the plates is substantially $n\dfrac{\pi}{2} \pm \arccos(-1/3)/4$, where n is an integer.

30.    (Currently Amended) A depolarizer <u>with three birefringent plates,</u> ~~as in claim 26~~ where the angle between two of the plates is substantially $\left(n + \dfrac{1}{2}\right)\dfrac{\pi}{2}$ where n is an integer.

Claims 31-32. (Canceled).

33.    (Previously Presented) A depolarizer as in claim 27 where the order of the three plates is selected such that at least one retardance frequency vanishes in a first quadrant.

34.    (Previously Presented) A depolarizer as in claim 28 where the order of the three plates is selected such that at least one retardance frequency vanishes in a first quadrant.

35.    (Previously Presented) A depolarizer as in claim 27 where the thicknesses of the three plates are selected such that the plate of intermediate thickness is positioned between the remaining two plates.

36.    (Previously Presented) A depolarizer as in claim 28 where the thicknesses of the three plates are selected such that the plate of least thickness is positioned between the remaining two plates.

37.    (New) A depolarizer as in claim 27 where each of the birefringent plates has an ordinary axis, each birefringent plate having a substantially different rotation angle of the respective ordinary axis.

38.    (New) A depolarizer as in claim 28 where each of the birefringent plates has an ordinary axis, each birefringent plate having a substantially different rotation angle of the respective ordinary axis.

39.    (New) A depolarizer as in claim 29 where the thicknesses of the plates are in a ratio of 1:3:9.

40.    (New) A depolarizer as in claim 30 where the thicknesses of the plates are in a ratio of 1:3:9.

41.    (New) A depolarizer as in claim 29 where the thicknesses of the plates are in a ratio of 4:3:9.

42.    (New) A depolarizer as in claim 30 where the thicknesses of the plates are in a ratio of 4:3:9.